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Security Council

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Draft resolution

The Security Council,

Decides to adopt the attached declaration on the item entitled "Proliferation of small arms and light weapons and mercenary activities: threats to peace and security in West Africa".

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Annex

The Security Council expresses its profound concern at the impact of the proliferation of small arms and light weapons, as well as mercenary activities, on peace and security in West Africa. These contribute to serious violations of human rights and international humanitarian law, which the Council condemns. The Council requests States of the subregion to ensure that relevant measures adopted at the national, regional and international levels to combat these problems are put into effect.

The Security Council calls on the States of the subregion to strengthen the adopted measures and to consider other appropriate steps, taking into account the recommendations emanating from this workshop. The Council also emphasizes the need for the States of the subregion to strengthen their cooperation in order to identify individuals and entities that engage illegally in trafficking in small arms and light weapons and provide support for mercenary activities in West Africa.

The Security Council acknowledges the need to involve national Commissions/national Committees and other relevant local structures (including civil society) more fully in the practical implementation of the moratorium on small arms and light weapons adopted by the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) on 31 October 1998 and of the Programme of Action adopted on 20 July 2001 by the United Nations Conference on the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects, held in New York.

The Security Council calls on the States of West Africa to consider the following recommendations that might contribute to the more effective implementation of the ECOWAS Moratorium on Small Arms:

(a) Broadening of the Moratorium to include an information exchange mechanism for all types of small arms procured by ECOWAS member States as well as for arms transfers by supplier countries;

(b) Enhancement of transparency in armaments, including through the establishment of an ECOWAS register that would record national inventories of small arms and light weapons;

(c) Strengthening national Commissions set up to oversee implementation of the Moratorium, in terms of staffing and equipment, and developing national plans of action;

(d) Taking necessary measures to build the capacity of the ECOWAS secretariat;

(e) Computerization of aircraft registration lists to ensure better monitoring of airspace, in accordance with the provisions of the Convention on International Civil Aviation, signed at Chicago on 7 December 1944;

(f) Introduction of a standardized end-user certificate for imported weapons.

The Security Council expresses concern at the serious violations of the arms embargoes in West Africa and calls on Member States to comply fully with the relevant resolutions of the Council.

The Security Council expresses its concern at links between mercenary activities, illicit arms trafficking and the violation of arms embargoes that help to foster and prolong conflicts in West Africa.

The Security Council emphasizes the need to make peoples and entities of the subregion aware of the danger and consequences of the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons and of mercenary activities.

The Security Council encourages all ECOWAS States, especially those most affected by the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons, to submit, as did other States, national reports on actions undertaken to implement the United Nations programme of action for small arms and light weapons to the Secretary-General in advance of the 2003 biennial review meeting.

The Security Council appeals to the donor community to assist States of the subregion in implementing and strengthening measures relating to the proliferation of small arms and light weapons and mercenary activities.

The Security Council calls on relevant parties to conflicts in West Africa to recognize the importance of activities related to disarmament, demobilization and reintegration in post-conflict situations, and of including such measures in the text of negotiated agreements, as well as specific measures for the collection and disposal of illicit and/or surplus small arms.

The Security Council calls on all States in the subregion to cease military support for armed groups in neighbouring countries, and to take action to prevent armed individuals and groups from using their territory to prepare and launch attacks on neighbouring countries.

The Security Council calls on arms-producing and exporting countries that have not yet done so to enact stringent laws, regulations and administrative procedures in order to ensure, through their implementation, more effective control over the transfer to West Africa of small arms by manufacturers, suppliers, brokers, and shipping and transit agents, including a mechanism that would facilitate the identification of illicit arms transfers, as well as careful scrutiny of end-user certificates.

The Security Council reiterates its call to regional and subregional organizations to develop policies, activities and advocacy for the benefit of war-affected children in their regions. In this regard, the Council welcomes the Accra Declaration and Programme of Action on war-affected children and the subsequent establishment of a Child Protection Unit at the ECOWAS secretariat.